

# Reflections

*by* Deborah Oster Pannell

Rocks and crevasses, vestiges of  
a bitter past, lie directly in my path  
I thought I would be far beyond them by now  
But no, the passage of time  
is never that deliberate,  
It pulses with expectations, and demons,  
fears, reflections of our worst selves

The rift of losing you was jagged and violent  
Then swiftly smoothed over by future thoughts,  
daily exigencies and the need to be confident  
Today I am swooning with sadness  
As I remember the sweet promise of all our plans  
We had it all mapped out.  
Now, seated in this room,  
Surrounded by the detritus of your collections  
The accumulations of your dog years,  
Somehow meant to fill the empty spaces  
of your unrealized dreams,  
Placeholders for the challenges that  
would remain abstract, untested  
I am left with the regrets of that other life,  
reminders of what could not be,  
daring me to attempt the impossible now

Oddly, I feel free, and happy beyond belief  
An unseen beat continues to tap out  
A path into tomorrow  
And nothing is stopping me from dancing

